



Opening Day Announced

• Dec. 13 Is The Big Day

Officials with the Missouri and Illinois Departments of Transportation along with U.S. Rep. Jo Ann Emerson made a very important announcement on Sept. 2.

The group revealed the much anticipated expected opening day for the new Bill Emerson Memorial Bridge.

"We couldn't be more excited about this," said MoDOT District Engineer Scott Meyer.

"We've been telling the public the bridge would be opened by the end of the year and we are very pleased to announce we anticipate traffic moving on the new bridge on Dec. 13."

Meyer reminded everyone, while Dec. 13 is the anticipated opening, it all depends on the weather.

"We still have work to complete and much of it is temperature dependent," Meyer said. "We're shooting for Dec. 13, and hopefully the weather will cooperate."

Cape Girardeau Chamber of Commerce President and CEO John Mehner was also on hand to discuss some of the special events the community is planning to celebrate the bridge opening. Those include song writing, photo and bridge building contests. For more information, see page 3.



Rep. Jo Ann Emerson receives the first Bill Emerson Memorial Bridge Dedication T-shirt from Margie Stull, left, and Jennifer Drury of CSPrinting.

Bridge Reaches From Missouri To Illinois

Tuesday, Aug. 12, the Bill Emerson Memorial Bridge completed its span from Cape Girardeau, Mo., to East Cape Girardeau, Ill.

The final steel girder closing the gap on the bridge and connecting it from one side to the other was put in place.

"It is so exciting to see the continued progress on the bridge construction," said District Engineer Scott Meyer. "The placement of the six-foot

piece of steel marks a major milestone for the bridge construction."

The connecting girder was set in place at roughly 6 a.m.



In the photo, workers pose in front of a floorbeam that spans the width of the bridge and connected to the last girders to be placed.

For more construction information and photographs, see page 2.

An In Depth Look: MoDOT Employees Temporarily Assigned To Bridge Construction

The Bill Emerson Memorial Bridge construction is a major project for MoDOT. In addition to employees hired by the contractor, MoDOT also has employees assigned to work on the construction and inspect the work. Because the project is so enormous, the department has temporarily reassigned employees from other divisions to work on the bridge.

Here's a look at another of the many employees who have given their talents to construction and the experience they've gained.

Brandon Simmons

Job title: Senior Materials Inspector



What did you do before working on

the bridge? I worked in MoDOT's materials division based in Sikeston.

What do you do with the bridge project? I help with material inspection when needed, but mostly hands-on work in the field. We try to stay versatile, so nobody gets stuck on the same thing day after day.

What has been your favorite part of working on the bridge? I like the experience this gives me. I am learning how the construction division works and I know it will be useful in the future when cooperating with construction personnel on other projects.

Will you miss working on the bridge when you go back to your regular job and why or why not? I'm sure I will. This has been very fun to me and I really enjoy working with the people on this project. At the same time, it will be nice to see the Emerson Bridge completed, knowing I had a role in it's construction.

Want The Opportunity To Demolish The Existing Bridge?

**Contact the Cape Girardeau
Chamber of Commerce for more
information, (573) 335-3312.**

Construction Update

The Bill Emerson Memorial Bridge construction continues in high gear.

Right now, the final cable work is being done and should be completed by the time you receive this newsletter.

Construction is underway on the Illinois approach roadway. The deck placement and concrete barrier curb will be finished after the approach work is completed.

There are many activities going on that are not as visibly evident--conduit for lighting, work on the permanent ladders and platforms in the tower legs,

work on the stay cable pipes, and finishing work and cleaning.

The bridge deck is currently made of pre-cast concrete panels, 11 inches thick. A three inch concrete overlay is being put on

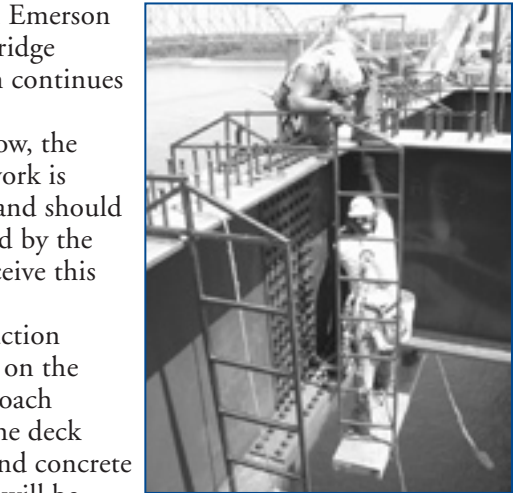


top of those and should be done before you receive your newsletter.

After the deck overlay is done, work will begin on placing cement grouting in the stay cable pipes.

Next, placing the concrete for the Missouri approach and the barrier curbs on the bridge will take place.

There will then be numerous lighting items to work on, as well as continuing cleaning and finishing work.



The Bridge Beat

with Queens of the Bridge

Lillian English of Gordonville, Mo., formerly Lillian McAtee, was chosen as one of the Queens of the Bridge to participate in the existing Mississippi River bridge dedication ceremony.

Seventy-five years ago, 12 young women from across the region were chosen to represent their hometowns at the dedication. Communities sending queens to the dedication included Cape

Girardeau, Jackson, Illinois, Fomfelt (now Scott City), Sikeston, Malden, Poplar Bluff, Kennett, Hayti, Charleston and Caruthersville in Missouri, and Cairo and Anna in Illinois.

At that time, people in the community voted for the young lady of their choice. Each vote cost a penny a piece, and the girl who raised the most money won. English said

she surprised people when, at the early age of 14, she surpassed all the others and was sent to represent her hometown.

While all of the contestants were considered queens of their respective communities, there was only one "Queen of the Bridge." Names were dropped in a bowl, and three were drawn. English came in second, while Agatha Mumma of Gideon, Mo., representing Malden, was chosen as the bridge queen.



English is seated second from left.

"I was so young, and it was such a wonderful experience," English said. "I had no idea that many people would be interested in the opening of the bridge, or that I was playing a part in such an important event."

Community Plans Events To Celebrate Bridge Opening



Events are well underway to commemorate the opening of the Bill

Emerson Memorial Bridge.

Students across Southeast Missouri and Southern Illinois are getting the opportunity to draw the bridge, build a bridge or write an essay about bridges.

Other events include a 5K run, 14-mile bike ride, community walk, pageant, song writing competition, photo competition and much more.

"We are excited and couldn't be happier about the upcoming dedication celebration. We encourage residents from throughout the region to come and join in the festivities and

be a part of Southeast Missouri history," said John Mehner, president and CEO of the Cape Girardeau Chamber of Commerce.

Some events are underway and will take place up until the actual bridge opening. The day of the opening, the Missouri and Illinois Departments of Transportation will host a dedication ceremony on the state line.

Following the ceremony, an inaugural drive/celebration caravan will take place. The Cape Antique Car Club will be providing many of the vehicles representing the past 75 years between the dedication of the old bridge and the new. The drive will include dignitaries, bridge workers and those receiving special rec-

ognition at the ceremony.

Southeast Missouri State University is making the University Center Ballroom available for an off-site location to watch the ceremony.

For more informa-

tion on all planned events,

visit the Bill Emerson Memorial Bridge website at www.modot.org/southeast/bridge.htm, then click Projects In Depth.

Emerson Bridge Fun Fact For Kids

Children and young adults will have plenty of opportunities to participate in the Bill Emerson Memorial Bridge opening festivities.

A bridge drawing contest, essay contest and bridge building contest are all being sponsored to help area children take part in this historic event.

For more information, check out the Bill Emerson Memorial Bridge website at www.modot.org/southeast/bridge.htm, click Projects In Depth.

The Beacon










is published quarterly by the Missouri Department of Transportation's Southeast District. It is mailed to Southeast Missouri residents interested in the construction of the Bill Emerson Memorial Bridge to provide information on the project's progress, significant milestones and related news. Comments, questions and suggestions are welcome. Please send to:

The Beacon

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Funding Facts

How Do Our Taxes Compare?

	Miles on system	State Revenue per mile	Volume Tax		Rank	Tolls
			Gasoline	Diesel		
 Arkansas	16,322	42,708	21.5	22.5	45	no
 Illinois	16,424	175,835	19	21.5	12	yes
 Iowa	9,680	86,253	20	22.5	30	no
 Kansas	10,385	78,537	23	25	33	yes
 Kentucky	27,443	52,811	16.4	13.4	41	yes
 Missouri	32,401	46,271	17	17	43	no
 Nebraska	9,978	49,647	24.5	24.5	42	no
 Oklahoma	12,275	86,530	16	13	28	yes
 Tennessee	13,760	86,244	21.4	18.4	31	yes

*Rank denotes Missouri's standing in state revenue per mile compared to all other states.

source: FHWA, Sept. 2002

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